

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

YEAR END FIRE REPORT

CALENDAR YEAR 2002



Hope 44 Fire

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FOR CY 2002

SEASON IN REVIEW

Even under the effects of a multiple year drought, the 2002 fire season was below average in terms of fire occurrence and acreage burned. On lands for which the Idaho Department of Lands, Clearwater Potlatch Timber Protective Association, and Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association provide wildland fire protection, fire fighters responded to 319 fires (77 percent of the 19 year average). These fires burned 2,175 acres, which is 23 percent of average.

Quick response by dedicated teams of firefighters kept 93 percent of these fires below 10 acres.

The season's largest ignition source was lightning, with 170 starts (53 percent of the years total). Human activity ignited 149 (47 percent) of the fires. Even though people started fewer fires, person-caused fires burned 66 percent of the burned area for 1433 acres. Lightning fires burned 742 acres or 34 percent of the acres. Of the human-caused ignitions, debris burning started the most fires and burned the most area. This is illustrated in Tables 3 and 4. The most expensive category was equipment use.

FIRE WEATHER

The winter of 2001/2002, began with a moisture deficit. The dry trend continued into the summer. Most areas received enough spring moisture for grass growth but inadequate for subsoil moisture replenishment. July turned hot as well as dry. It was Boise's second warmest July on record and some weather stations received 20 percent of their average precipitation. The dry trend continued through the end of the year with many weather stations receiving only 50 percent of their normal precipitation for the last six months of 2002. This prompted extending the closed fire season (when burning permits are required) until October 31.

An offsetting aspect of the dry year was that there were not as many lightning fires as average (74 percent). This was due to inadequate humidity for cloud development. The bad news is that the stage is set for an active fire season in 2003. Many trees are being lost due to drought and are becoming available fuel.

MULTIPLE FIRES

The 2002 fire season saw 35 instances of more than one fire per day on a Forest Protective District. SITPA had 14 in one day, the most of any District. The largest fires (Oxbow and Hope 44) occurred on multiple fire days. Area fire personnel, however, do not believe this to be a contributing factor in their escape.

LARGE FIRES

2002 saw six fires exceed 100 acres. Two of these were on Craig Mountain District and one each on Pend Oreille, Ponderosa, Maggie Creek and West St. Joe. Table 1 provides further information:

TABLE 1

Fires over 100 acres

Fire Name	District Name	Out Size	Total Cost
Oxbow	Craig Mountain FPD	565	\$234,249
HOPE 44	Pend Oreille FPD	312	\$2,062,142
Fish Hatchery	Ponderosa FPD	300	\$10,440
View Point	Maggie Creek FPD	150	\$2,721
Over The Hill	Craig Mountain FPD	130	\$577
LOTUS POINT	West St. Joe FPD	122	\$246,023

TEAM USE

The Idaho Department of Lands supported Interagency Incident Management Teams with 19 employees serving as team members. In the Northern Rockies, IDL personnel held two positions on a Type 1 team, and 13 positions on Type 2 teams. Great Basin participation consisted of three slots on Type 2 teams and one on a Type 1 team.

Only one IDL fire required a management team. Alan Chrisman's Northern Rockies Type 2 team managed the Hope 44 fire on the Pend Oreille District. This fire threatened numerous residences and burned along a highway.

FIRE COSTS

The fire reports estimate 2002's fire suppression costs at \$3,554,343. The ten most expensive fires of the year are shown in Table 2. These fires represent 3 percent of the fires, 52 percent of the acreage, and 82 percent of the cost.

Table 2

Ten Most Expensive Fires

District Name	Fire Name	Total Cost	Out Size
Pend Oreille FPD	HOPE 44	\$2,062,142	312
West St. Joe FPD	LOTUS POINT	\$246,023	122
Craig Mountain FPD	Oxbow	\$234,249	565
Southwest IdahoFPD	Seven Sisters	\$118,599	16
CPTPA	DENT BRIDGE	\$95,156	11
Southwest IdahoFPD	Grimes Creek	\$41,671	12
CPTPA	WELLS BENCH	\$37,206	30
Maggie Creek FPD	Cottonwood	\$33,978	5
Southwest IdahoFPD	Ola Grade	\$31,724	4
Maggie Creek FPD	Clear Creek	\$26,056	55
	Total	\$2,926,805	1132

Tables 3 and 4 illustrate lightning started the most fires (53 percent), burned more acres than any other cause (34 percent) and the cost per fire ranked third at \$4,647. Debris burning started the most human caused fires at 13 percent of the total ignitions. The most expensive category last year was equipment use, due to an automobile accident starting the costliest fire of the year.

The next highest cost per fire is the miscellaneous category, nine of which were unknown causes.



Oxbow Fire

Our average cost per fire was \$11,142 and cost per acre was \$1,634.

Human caused fires cost \$2,764,353. Of this amount, \$148,791 (5 percent) has been billed and we have collected \$45,645 (31 percent) of what we have billed.

Table 3**Number of Fires by Cause with Costs**

General Cause	% of Fires	# of Fires	Total Cost	% of Cost	Cost /Fire
Arson	3	9	\$11,258	0.3	\$1,251
Campfire	9	27	\$53,189	1.5	\$1,970
Children	2	7	\$4,329	0.1	\$618
Debris Burning	13	42	\$99,686	2.8	\$2,373
Equipment Use	8	25	\$2,147,134	60.4	\$85,885
Lightning	53	170	\$789,990	22.2	\$4,647
Miscellaneous	11	36	\$445,779	12.5	\$12,383
Smoking	1	3	\$2,978	0.1	\$993
Totals		319	\$3,554,343		\$11,142

Table 4**Acres Burned by Cause with Costs**

General Cause	Acres Burned	Total Cost	Cost/Acre	Amount Billed	Amount Collected
Arson	173	\$11,258	\$65	\$1,508	\$0
Campfire	19	\$53,189	\$2,729	\$869	\$634
Children	5	\$4,329	\$941	\$0	\$0
Debris Burning	524	\$99,686	\$190	\$53,337	\$19,169
Equipment Use	462	\$2,147,134	\$4,647	\$43,688	\$8,273
Lightning	742	\$789,990	\$1,065	\$0	\$0
Miscellaneous	250	\$445,779	\$1,783	\$49,390	\$17,569
Smoking	1	\$2,978	\$4,254	\$0	\$0
Totals	2,175	\$3,554,343	\$1,634	\$148,791	\$45,645



Hope 44 Fire

AIRCRAFT USE

Craigmont Air Service provided two radial engine Dromader single engine air tankers for the final season of their contract. These aircraft, each with the characteristic camel emblem, flew 31.82 hours and dropped 27,575 gallons of retardant for a cost of \$118,477.00.

IDL contracted two light helicopters with operating bases in Coeur d'Alene and Craigmont from Silverhawk Aviation. These aircraft flew 252.1 total hours at a cost of \$174,294.00. The USFS paid \$49,866.00 of this total for project work and fire suppression within their jurisdiction.

A six-person helitack crew based at the Coeur d'Alene Fire Cache was formed this season. The crew has a foreman and an assistant with four crewmembers.

Members of the crew supported a variety of IDL and federal fires throughout the state as well as assignments in Alaska, Colorado and Montana.

VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA)

The Volunteer Fire Assistance program improves the capability and effectiveness of America's 26,000 rural volunteer fire departments (170 in Idaho) to protect lives and other rural investments. The purpose of this program is to provide financial, technical, and other assistance to State Foresters and other appropriate officials to organize, train, and equip fire departments in rural communities. In 2002, 37 rural volunteer fire departments received the \$167,636 Volunteer Fire Assistance funds made available to Idaho.

FEDERAL EXCESS PERSONAL PROPERTY

The Forest Service is charged with assuring that federal excess property is acquired, used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with federal laws and regulations. Federal excess personal property is loaned to state forestry agencies and their cooperators for wildland and rural community fire protection. In 2002, 16 excess property items valued at \$496,393 were acquired and placed into service in Idaho. The total value of the FEPP inventory in Idaho is about \$12,671,515.

IDAHO FIRE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (IFAP)

The Idaho Legislature recognized the need to provide fire assistance funding to Fire Service Organizations (structural fire departments and associations) statewide. This funding is provided to assist Fire Service Organizations with organizing, training and purchasing equipment for fire protection and suppression.

In 2002, IDL received 48 project requests from 44 Fire Service Organizations. The requests totaled \$436,560. The IDL was able to fund 27 requests with the \$236,000 available. Thanks to the wisdom of the Idaho Legislature, the citizens of this state will benefit from a more coordinated fire response program, with high quality, well-equipped personnel.

WILDLAND FIRE PREVENTION

The Keep Idaho Green road-painting program completed 204 prevention signs at rest stops, historical sites and state parks. This is an interagency program involving Department of Transportation, Department of Parks and Recreation, Region 4 of the US Forest Service and the Idaho State Office of the Bureau of Land Management.

Number of Fires in Each Class, by District - 2002

<i>District Name</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>
Cataldo FPD	7	5	2				
CPTPA	42	33	7	2			
Craig Mountain FPD	13	6	3	2	1	1	
Kootenai Valley FPD	34	27	7				
Maggie Creek FPD	31	14	14	2	1		
Mica FPD	6	4	2				
Pend Oreille FPD	33	20	10	1		1	1
Ponderosa FPD	14	3	5	5		1	
Priest Lake FPD	18	12	6				
SITPA	66	60	6				
Southwest Idaho FPD	43	25	15	3			
West St. Joe FPD	13	10	2		1		

Fires by Cause by District

District Name	Total Of CountOfFireID	Arson	Campfire	Children	Debris Burning	Equipment Use	Lightning	Miscellaneous
Cataldo FPD	7		3				2	2
CPTPA	42		1	1	5	3	24	8
Craig Mountain FPD	13	1			2	1	9	
Kootenai Valley FPD	34		7	3	7	1	13	3
Maggie Creek FPD	31	1	2		4	6	11	7
Mica FPD	6				3	1		2
Pend Oreille FPD	32	1	1		13	4	9	4
Ponderosa FPD	14		1		3	5	2	3
Priest Lake FPD	18		2	1	1	2	10	2
SITPA	66	2	5	2	1		53	
Southwest Idaho FPD	43		5		1		35	2
West St. Joe FPD	13	4			2	2	2	3

District Acres by Cause for 2002

<i>District Name</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Arson</i>	<i>Campfire</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Debris Burning</i>	<i>Equipment Use</i>	<i>Lightning</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>	<i>Smoking</i>
Cataldo FPD	1.16		0.30				0.66	0.20	
CPTPA	58.47		0.10	0.10	6.80	2.35	4.22	44.90	
Craig Mountain FPD	777.10	15.00			130.50	4.00	627.60		
Kootenai Valley FPD	14.46		0.61	4.10	6.20	0.10	1.70	1.75	
Maggie Creek FPD	241.85	150.00	0.02		11.75	7.81	14.32	57.95	
Mica FPD	3.40				2.85	0.10		0.45	
Pend Oreille FPD	337.21	0.30	0.10		18.11	314.50	3.30	0.90	
Ponderosa FPD	490.20		0.30		337.00	132.20	0.20	20.50	
Priest Lake FPD	7.34		0.11	0.01	2.50	0.60	3.61	0.51	
SITPA	14.25	0.30	0.50	0.35	0.10		12.30		0.70
Southwest Idaho FPD	99.23		17.45		8.00		73.48	0.30	
West St. Joe FPD	130.55	7.45			0.20	0.40	0.30	122.20	
Totals	2175.22	173.05	19.49	4.56	524.01	462.06	741.69	249.66	0.7

Suppression Cost per Acre for 2002

<i>District Name</i>	<i>Total Size</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>Cost/Acre</i>
Cataldo FPD	1	\$10,331	\$8,906
CPTPA	58	\$211,156	\$3,611
Craig Mountain FPD	777	\$253,340	\$326
Kootenai Valley FPD	14	\$22,831	\$1,579
Maggie Creek FPD	242	\$114,600	\$474
Mica FPD	3	\$1,493	\$439
Pend Oreille FPD	337	\$2,124,457	\$6,300
Ponderosa FPD	490	\$81,416	\$166
Priest Lake FPD	7	\$38,535	\$5,250
SITPA	14	\$97,508	\$6,843
Southwest Idaho FPD	99	\$334,460	\$3,371
West St. Joe FPD	131	\$264,381	\$2,025